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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/552,370	07/26/2006	Takashi Nakano	279330US3PCT	1876
22850	7590	03/06/2009	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314				NGUYEN, THUKHANH T
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1791				
NOTIFICATION DATE			DELIVERY MODE	
03/06/2009			ELECTRONIC	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/552,370	NAKANO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	THU KHANH T. NGUYEN	1791	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 January 2009.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 14-16 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 10/07/05 & 02/13/07.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: JP2002121599.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

2. Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Shimada et al (7,037,885).

Shimada et al teach a soap molding apparatus, comprising a split mold (1) having a first larger half (Fig. 2, 1A) and a second smaller half (1B), wherein the mold are capable of splitting at ratio are within the range of 52:48 and 66:34 (see Figs. 2-3).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are

such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jackson (174,365) in view of Kudriavetz (4,389,365).

Jackson discloses a soap mold, comprising first and second mold halves for forming spherical soap balls (Fig. 2, b-b), wherein the molded soap balls stay with one of the mold half after forming (col. 2, 2nd paragraph).

However, Jackson fails to disclose that the mold halves are split at a ratio of 52:48 to 66:34.

Kudriavetz disclose spherical forming molds, comprising a upper half mold (16) and a lower half mold (12) forming a mold cavity, wherein one of the mold has a diameter at its opening of at least 0.5% less than the diameter of the widest part of the forming ball so that the cavity volume ratio will be from about 10:7 to 5:2 (which are overlapped with the ratio of 52:48 and 66:34) in order to provide excellent retention of the balls in one mold plate and prevent tearing of the products during removal, wherein these ratios will vary depending upon the overall size of the mold, the material of the product being formed, the material being molded and its intended use (col. 2, lines 14-42).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the applicant's invention was made to modify Jackson by providing the mold halves splitting at different ratio as taught by Kudriavetz above in order to facilitate the retention of the forming balls while prevent the products from tearing during removal.

5. Claims 3-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimada et al ('885) or Jackson ('365) and Kudriavetz ('365) as applied to claims 1-2 above, and further in view of the Japanese reference (JP 2002-121,599).

Shimada, Jackson and Kudriavetz fail to disclose that the split molds having a roughness between 0.01 to 30 μm .

The JP reference discloses a mold for forming soap, comprising upper mold (24) and lower mold (21), wherein the molds have a roughness between 0.01 to 30 μm (paragraph [0013] & the abstract) in order to form a smooth surface on the forming product while not interfere with product retention and/or removal.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the applicant's invention was made to modify Shimada, Jackson and Kudriavetz by providing mold halves having roughness of between 0.01 to 30 μm as taught by the JP reference in order to form a smooth surface on the forming product.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to THU KHANH T. NGUYEN whose telephone number is (571) 272-1136. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30am-4:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Yogendra Gupta can be reached on 571-272-1316. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Yogendra N Gupta/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1791

TN